

Bulugh Al-Maram

Attainment of the Objective According to Evidence of the Ordinances

BY IBN HAJAR AL-ASQALANI

Bulugh Al-Maram min Adillatil Ahkam is the Arabic title of a collection of ahadeeth (narrations from Prophet Muhammad, salallahu alayhe wa sallam,) that concern matters of Fiqh or Islamic Jurisprudence. Chosen, sorted and categorized by a well known and great scholar and Master of Hadeeth Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Hajar Asqalani (d. 852 AH), the book is widely accepted and used and well received by scholars throughout history. Ibn Hajar compiled the work relaying on the best sources of hadeeth for which he had an understanding and knowledge that was matched by none of his contemporaries. For sake of completeness and ease of cross reference, Ibn Hajar named the source of each hadeeth which include, among others, major Hadeeth compendiums like: Sahih of Bukhari, Sahih of Muslim, Sunan Abu Dawud, Jami' of Tirmithi, Sunan of an-Nasa'i, Sunan of Ibn Majah, and Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal.

Ibn Hajar's objective in compiling *Bulugh Al-Maram* was to put together the ahadeeth which were widely used by most *Fuqaha* or Jurists in driving Islamic rulings about all matters of Fiqh—this was his sole criterion in choosing what to include in the collection and because of that one finds some ahadeeth

that are known to be graded as weak narrations. And for this reason it is highly advisable for the common reader to approach *Bulugh Al-Maram* through any of scholarly expounds on it—and they are so many, past and present. This should also help with understanding not only the rulings themselves but also the ways and principles scholars used to conclude them.

Covering the majority of the Fiqh topics—basics of worship matters, worldly and business transaction, common in average Fiqh refer-

ences—the book presents a total of 1,358 hadeeth, each provided with the basic idea of the ruling in which it was used and is presented under the particular category of the chapter. In addition, each hadeeth has under it the written origins, which includes the narrator and many are followed by a comparison of different versions of narration.

This edition of *Bulugh al-Maram* presents all ahadeeth in Arabic and English and is well marked with footnotes, and complicated terms are explained in the sub notes. It is not an over statement to mention that *Bulugh Al-Maram* is one of the most sought out books for Islamic Jurisprudence. It is not uncommon today to find many students of knowledge who memorize the whole book.

Some interesting fact about the author is in order here, for indeed it is his knowledge and *taqwa* that are behind the steady and overwhelming success this book has seen over the centuries. Ibn Hajar began his studies at the age of five and completed the memorization of the Qur'an by the age of nine. He is a Shafi'i scholar (but the book is written without any reference to a particular *Math-hab*) and a Hadeeth Master (*Hafidh*). He studied under many renowned scholars in Cairo, Yemen and the Hijaz (Makkah and Madinah). He authored many works on hadeeth, history, biography, Qur'anic exegesis, and poetry plus Shafi'i jurisprudence; among the most famous of them is his fourteen-volume commentary on Sahih of Bukhari called *Fath al-Bari*.

Bulugh Al-Maram should be a bookshelf reference in all Muslims homes. ▲

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Reviewed by Ibrahim Hassen

